

ANC08FA053

In-person interview with Quinn.

Quinn is the 14 year old, sole survivor, of the accident that occurred on April 15, 2008, near Chickaloon, Alaska, involving a Eurocopter AS 350 B2 helicopter, N213EH.

The interview was conducted on August 13, 2008, at 642 S. Alaska Street, Palmer, Alaska.

Present at the interview were myself, an FAA air safety inspector, Terry Seward (Quinn's mother, and Joseph Stacey (Quinn's attorney). Quinn had suffered a serious head injury during the accident, and was presently in therapy for his loss of memory. The therapist authorized the interview as long as stress was kept to a minimum.

Previously during a telephone conversation Terri Seward had indicated that Quinn had said he was responsible for the accident, and she asked if it were possible that the pilot could have been letting him fly the helicopter. The assertion by Quinn, that he might be responsible for the accident, lead me to take a closer look at the helicopter controls accessible to Quinn. The flight controls on the left side of the helicopter, where Quinn was seated, had been removed, however the rotor-brake, fuel flow control lever and emergency fuel shutoff were readily accessible, mounted on the floor between his and the pilot's seat.

During the interview Quinn recalled arriving at the landing area/rest area with his stepfather. He recalled playing with some other children while awaiting the arrival of the helicopter. He said as the helicopter approached his stepfather told him to stay back away from the landing area. He said the helicopter landed, and the pilot got out. He remembered the pilot talking about the helicopter, and being placed in the left front seat of the helicopter. Quinn said as the helicopter picked up into a hover he thought how cool it was. He said the pilot made a couple turns, left and right before departing. He said he remembered feeling like he was falling, and that the pilot said over the intercom to hold on because they were going to crash. He said he did not remember why they were going to crash. He said he did not remember the impact, but he remembered that after the crash "they" were telling him to get out of the helicopter because they were afraid that there might be a fire. He couldn't tell me who "they" were. I showed Quinn the photograph of a small silver/grey and black pack. He said the pack belonged to him, but he could not recall where it was in the helicopter prior to the crash. I showed Quinn a photograph of a nit stalking cap that had been placed on the pilot's cyclic stick after the crash. He said the cap belonged to his stepfather, but he did not remember how it got placed on the cyclic stick. Quinn could not relate why he had felt he was responsible for the accident.

No additional useful information was gleaned from the interview. Quinn's mother said the therapist indicated that Quinn might regain or lose more memory with time.

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